Ministry of Environment and the Environmental Assessment Office

2017/18 – 2019/20 SERVICE PLAN

February 2017

BRITISH COLUMBIA

For more information on the British Columbia Ministry of Environment, see Ministry Contact Information on Page 25 or contact:

Ministry of Environment
PO BOX 9335
STN PROV GOVT
VICTORIA, BC
V8W 9M1

or visit our website at
http://www.gov.bc.ca/env

Published by the Ministry of Environment

Minister
Accountability Statement

The *Ministry of Environment and the Environmental Assessment Office 2017/18 - 2019/20 Service Plan* was prepared under my direction in accordance with the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act*. I am accountable for the basis on which the plan has been prepared.

Honourable Mary Polak
Minister of Environment

February 7, 2017

Table of Contents

Minister Accountability Statement 3

Ministry of Environment

Purpose of the Ministry 5

Strategic Direction and Context 6

Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Performance Measures 7

Resource Summary 16

Environmental Assessment Office

Purpose of the Ministry 18

Strategic Direction and Context 19

Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Performance Measures 21

Resource Summary 24

Appendix: Ministry Contact Information 25

Purpose of the Ministry

The Ministry of Environment is responsible for the protection, management and conservation of B.C.'s water, land, air and living resources. Its expertise in policy, science, research and analysis are central to supporting all its responsibilities. Ministry legislation, regulation, and public outreach activities ensure a safe and healthy environment for British Columbians, sustainable economic development, and clear and predictable decisions for the public and business community.

Key Ministry functions include:

- Leading action on climate change
- Managing discharges to the environment
- Proactively responding to environmental risks
- Protecting B.C.'s biodiversity including ecosystems, native species and natural habitats
- Managing the province's parks and protected areas
- Developing legislation, regulations and policies based on sound scientific knowledge and expertise
- Environmental monitoring, data management and reporting
- Monitoring and enforcing compliance with environmental laws and regulations

The Ministry strives to ensure that all British Columbians will continue to benefit from the effective and prudent management of natural resources, allowing future generations to enjoy a safe and healthy environment.

Cathedral Grove, MacMillan Provincial Park

Strategic Direction and Context

Strategic Direction

All Ministers, as members of the B.C. Executive Council (Provincial Cabinet), are provided letters from the Premier outlining their key responsibilities. The Minister of Environment's mandate letter can be reviewed on the government website.

In addition to responding to the specific direction outlined in the mandate letter, this service plan illustrates the ways in which the Ministry is supporting the corporate priorities identified in the current Government's *Province of British Columbia Strategic Plan* and the *Taxpayer Accountability Principles*, including a commitment to open government and an accountable and cost-conscious culture.

Strategic Context

British Columbia is world renowned for its unique and diverse environmental features. The northern, interior and coastal regions host a wide variety of ecosystems, plant and animal species, and intact predator-prey systems. With an abundance of clean and safe water, land and air, British Columbia provides a rich and healthy environment for its citizens, visitors and natural inhabitants to live and prosper. B.C.'s vast parks and protected areas system plays a fundamental role in protecting the Province's natural legacy in addition to providing exceptional outdoor recreation opportunities.

With the responsibility of environmental protection comes the opportunity to sustainably develop natural resources such as liquefied natural gas, mining and forestry. The Ministry of Environment plays a key role in providing strategic science-based knowledge, policies and regulations that guide how activity can sustainably take place on the land base. The Province also remains committed to world-leading environmental protection. This is reflected in B.C.'s implementation of the new *Water Sustainability Act,* development of the Cumulative Effects Framework, continued action on the Five-Year Plan for Species at Risk, as well as in the Province's five conditions required for pipeline project approval. The Ministry continues to provide the leadership and guidance necessary to strike the balance where both the environment and economy thrive.

In 2016, B.C. worked with the federal, provincial and territorial governments to establish a Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change to meet Canada's commitments under the Paris Agreement, including national greenhouse gas targets. Global climate change has already impacted B.C., resulting in consequences for the environment and economy. Proactive measures to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions and invest in adaptation efforts will reduce risks and costs, prevent damage, and will allow B.C. to excel in clean jobs, technology and innovation.

It is only through collaboration, however, that these goals will be realized. The Province works in partnership with First Nations, federal and local governments, neighbouring jurisdictions, industry and citizens of British Columbia in order to collectively respond to a changing ecological and socio-economic climate.

Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Performance Measures

Goal 1: Effective, long-term action on climate change

Objective 1.1: Maintain B.C.'s global leadership on climate change

B.C. is a world leader in climate change preparedness and greenhouse gas emissions reductions. These efforts are contributing to B.C.'s growing green, clean technology economy.

Strategies

The Ministry leads these efforts by:

- Coordinating cross-government policy that supports communities, families, businesses and local governments to save energy and reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- Encouraging other jurisdictions to follow B.C.'s leadership in establishing effective policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- Strengthening B.C.'s public sector leadership in climate action with an increased emphasis on adaptation planning and public sector greenhouse gas emissions reductions, while maintaining carbon neutral government performance and investing in strategic carbon offsets
- Supporting competitiveness of B.C. business and industry through revenue neutral carbon tax and continued development of market mechanisms, as well as ongoing work to align provincial, territorial, federal and other jurisdictional regulatory programs

In 2012, the Province met its interim target of a six per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions below baseline 2007 levels. In 2014, the Province's greenhouse gas emissions were 5.5 per cent below baseline levels. B.C. remains committed to achieving the 2050 target of an 80 per cent reduction below 2007 levels.

The recently released Climate Leadership Plan outlines how the Province is continuing on a path to meet its long term climate goals. In alignment with the measures in the Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change, the Climate Leadership Plan highlights 21 new actions that are expected to reduce annual greenhouse gas emissions by up to 25 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalents below current forecasts by 2050. The Province is focused on implementing the Climate Leadership Plan actions together with all levels of government and stakeholders over the coming years.

Objective 1.2: Effective management of the risks associated with a changing climate

The Ministry leads efforts to improve the capacity of decision makers in managing risks associated with climate change in British Columbia.

Strategies

The Ministry leads efforts by:

- Evaluating the potential human and financial risk from climate change and identifying options to reduce risk to acceptable levels
- Collaborating with partners to develop and disseminate effective risk management approaches
- Reviewing, updating and implementing legislation, policies and programs to ensure B.C. is prepared for and resilient to the impacts of climate change

The Province is working with the federal government and other jurisdictions to improve managing risks associated with a changing climate, including an updated adaptation strategy that will help British Columbia build resilience, reduce costs and ensure a thriving society.

Goal 2: Clean and safe water, land and air

Objective 2.1: Enhanced protection and stewardship of water resources

The Ministry develops innovative tools and strategies for water resource management through relationships with First Nations, local and federal government, industry and environmental groups. Strong science and policy inform resource management decisions, ensuring B.C.'s supply of clean, fresh water is sustainable and responsive to a changing climate and growing demands.

Strategies

The Ministry leads these efforts by:

- Providing leadership in the development of water strategies, policy, legislation and regulations to protect and manage the quality and quantity of surface water and groundwater
- Developing and implementing monitoring strategies for surface water, groundwater, snow and aquatic ecosystem health
- Collaboratively developing transboundary water management agreements with neighbouring jurisdictions

Government is implementing the *Water Sustainability Act* (WSA), brought into effect in February 2016, using a phased approach. The WSA helps protect water flows for ecosystems and fish, and

includes new and improved requirements for groundwater use and licensing, well construction and maintenance, dam safety, and compliance.

Objective 2.2: Enhanced protection and stewardship of our land

The Ministry manages environmental pressures from development and waste generation through the prevention of toxins and waste entering the environment. It ensures minimal environmental impact where discharges to the environment are inevitable or hazardous materials are used.

Strategies

The Ministry leads these efforts by:

- Managing the authorization of discharges from human activities such as mining, landfills, sewage treatment, smelters and wood processing plants
- Providing provincial leadership in municipal solid waste reduction through mandatory regional solid waste management plans and the promotion of organics recycling and food waste prevention initiatives
- Performing ongoing oversight of mandatory product stewardship programs

The Ministry uses regulatory and non-regulatory approaches to achieve these strategies. This includes the 2016 update of the Solid Waste Management Planning Guideline and overseeing the implementation of the Recycling Regulation to strengthen waste management.

Performance Measure 1: Municipal solid waste disposal

Performance Measure	2015/16 Baseline[1]	2016/17 Forecast	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target	2019/20 Target
Per capita municipal solid waste disposal (kg per person)	497	450	425[2]	400	375

Data Source: Ministry of Environment, manually compiled.

[1] Data based on 2015 calendar year.

[2] Numbers have been revised from the *2016/17-2018/19 Service Plan* to reconcile projections to be based upon calendar year.

Discussion

Reported disposal rates include waste from the residential sector, institutional, commercial, and light industrial sources as well as waste from construction, demolition and renovation activities. The per capita disposal rate is an estimate of how many kilograms of solid waste one person sends to a landfill or other disposal site in a given year. B.C. is continuing to progress toward the target of 350 kilograms per person by 2020/21.

Performance Measure 2: Organic waste disposal

Performance Measure	2015/16 Baseline[1]	2016/17 Forecast	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target	2019/2020 Target
Per cent of population covered by an organic waste disposal restriction	64.3%	68%	70%	70%	75%

Data Source: Ministry of Environment, manually compiled.

[1] Data based on 2015 calendar year.

Discussion

Organic waste represents up to 40% of all waste currently sent for disposal. The Ministry continues to work toward the target of 75% of the population covered by an organic waste disposal restriction by 2020/21. This target is further supported by food waste prevention initiatives across the province.

Objective 2.3: Enhanced protection and stewardship of our air

In order to protect human health and the environment, the Ministry manages activities that influence air quality.

Strategies

The Ministry leads these efforts by:

- Establishing air quality objectives to inform decision making and support local airshed management initiatives
- Monitoring air quality to better understand the impacts from human activities and environmental events such as forest fires
- Regulating contaminated air emissions from industry and non-point sources such as wood stoves and open burning, as well as promoting clean technology standards for industrial air emissions
- Working with other governments to establish and implement national air quality management systems

As part of the Northeast Air Monitoring Program, an initiative that tracks potential impacts on air quality from the oil and gas industry, the Ministry operates air quality monitoring stations in the Peace Region. Real time monitoring data from these and other stations across the province is shared with the public on BCAirQuality.ca, responding to the growing public demand for air quality information.

Objective 2.4: Effective management of environmental risks and threats to public safety

Risks to living organisms, the environment and the economy can be caused by effluents, emissions, wastes, resource depletion or other living organisms. In the case of environmental emergencies and risks to public safety, the Ministry is prepared to respond swiftly and effectively.

Strategies

The Ministry leads these efforts by:

- Completing the development of a comprehensive provincial spill response regime, including a province-wide preparedness and response organization with new legislative and regulatory requirements
- Establishing risk assessment frameworks to determine where action is most critical (e.g. managing remediation of high-risk contaminated sites)
- Preventing the introduction and spread of invasive species
- Proactively dealing with dangerous wildlife that pose a risk of causing injury or death

The Province's first priority in managing environmental risk and public safety is prevention. For example, in the case of human wildlife conflict, the Ministry enforces laws regulating attractants in urban areas and delivers proactive public education in partnership with Wildsafe BC.

Goal 3: Healthy and diverse native species and ecosystems

Objective 3.1: Stewardship and management of natural values on B.C.'s land base

The Ministry plays a critical role in defining and delivering the conservation objectives that preserve biodiversity across the province. Its strategic and scientific expertise in the management and analysis of B.C.'s natural values influences the work carried out by partner ministries. Within the Ministry, the natural values in provincial parks and protected areas are managed through management plans.

Strategies

The Ministry leads these efforts by:

- Defining the principles, scientific foundation, strategic long term objectives and policies for a provincial approach to conservation, including the Conservation Framework, First Nations agreements, the Cumulative Effects Framework and the Environmental Mitigation Policy
- Assessing and reporting on the state and trends of conservation values, and determining where action is most critical at a provincial and regional scale

- Collaborating with First Nations and communities in protected area planning and management to preserve and care for natural and cultural assets
- Managing parks and protected areas for ecological representation, biodiversity and landscape connectivity

Data and information on species and ecosystems is used to assess and report on biodiversity values to British Columbians. The Province works closely with inter-jurisdictional colleagues to align conservation priorities, contributing to regional, national and international conservation objectives.

Objective 3.2: Conservation and enhancement of native species and ecosystems

The Ministry works to assess, set priorities and determine actions for the conservation and recovery of plants, animals and ecosystems.

Strategies

The Ministry leads these efforts by:

- Securing and restoring native species and ecosystems through area and threat-based initiatives
- Setting objectives and leading strategic planning for biodiversity management, as well as implementing research programs to support conservation and inform decision-making
- Collaborating with the federal government, First Nations, stakeholders and partner ministries to develop and implement recovery strategies and action plans for species at risk
- Operating the Conservation Data Center to collect and disseminate status information on plants, animals and ecosystems in the province

The Ministry is determining new ways of establishing conservation priorities and achieving outcomes. Efforts and actions will target comprehensive approaches to increase resilience, maximize return on investment and benefit multiple species and ecosystems.

Goal 4: Sustainable use of British Columbia's Natural Capital

Natural capital is the Province's stock of natural assets which include water, land, air and all living things.

Objective 4.1: Inventory, monitoring, science and assessment for robust decision making

The Ministry acquires, manages and analyzes data and information on water, land, air, species and ecosystems. Strong, solid information and science provide the platform for natural resource decision making across the province.

Strategies

The Ministry leads these efforts by:

- Ensuring that relevant monitoring and research is conducted and pertinent data is collected in order to support and solve resource management issues
- Incorporating the economic and social value of our natural capital into the development of policies and programs
- Continuing to advance the provision of data and information to the public and interested parties

The Ministry manages various environmental monitoring networks, such as air, groundwater and snow, in order to examine the state and trends of our environment. Information received from these networks and other programs is critical for tracking trends over time, interpreting connections between the environment, human well-being and the economy, and for measuring progress towards sustainability.

Objective 4.2: Policies, standards and regulations that are clear, consistent and predictable

Clear and consistent policies, standards and regulations increase certainty for economic development while ensuring the protection of human health and the environment. A predictible regulatory environment supports a positive investment climate.

Strategies

The Ministry leads these efforts by:

- Incorporating world-leading approaches and best achievable technologies into environmental guidelines, policies and regulations
- Engaging with environmental groups, First Nations, industry and the public on the development of regulatory requirements and standards
- Ensuring the timely review of permit applications in support of business certainty and environmental protection

The Ministry routinely reviews its policies, regulations, fees and fines to ensure they include best available information, technology and practices.

Performance Measure 3: Improved technology standards

Performance Measure	2008/09 Baseline	2016/17 Forecast	2017/18 Target[1]	2018/19 Target	2019/2020 Target
Number of new standards, guidelines or objectives incorporating best achievable technology practices that reduce discharges to the environment	3	11	12	13	14

Data Source: Ministry of Environment, corresponding policy, guideline, code of practice, or regulation.

[1] Targets are cumulative.

Discussion

Pollution sources are routinely assessed for new opportunities to reduce environmental impacts. Developing approaches that minimize impacts while ensuring economic viability is complex and involves collaboration with industry, local government, academia and other experts.

Objective 4.3: Compliance with regulatory requirements

The Ministry conducts inspections of regulatory requirements and where necessary takes enforcement action commensurate with any non-compliance. Investigations are typically conducted where a more stringent response may be required such as court prosecution.

Strategies

The Ministry leads these efforts by:

- Continually improving its regulatory oversight with an ongoing emphasis on inspections of higher risk sites
- Conducting investigations into environmental violations and implementing new enforcement tools such as administrative monetary penalties to address non-compliance
- Publicly naming companies and individuals subject to enforcement action, as well as those with outstanding environmental court fines

Integrity in the regulatory regime established to protect human health, the environment and public safety is critical. Promotion of compliance, and achieving high rates of voluntary compliance, are top priorities. Where necessary, however, the Ministry will take action to enforce requirements using a variety of enforcement tools.

Performance Measure 4: Inspections conducted under the *Environmental Management Act*

Performance Measure	2014/15 Baseline	2016/17 Forecast	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target	2019/20 Target
Number of inspections conducted under the *Environmental Management Act*[1]	711	765	2000	2000	2000

Data Source: Ministry of Environment, manually compiled.

[1] Inspections (in office reviews and on site examinations) conducted under the act and associated regulations.

Performance Measure 5: Coordinated Mine Inspections (new)

Performance Measure	2015/16 Baseline	2016/17 Forecast	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target	2019/20 Target
Number of mine inspections coordinated with Ministry of Energy and Mines and the Environmental Assessment Office[1]	N/A	N/A	5	10	15

Data Source: Manually compiled by the Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Energy and Mines, the Environmental Assessment Office.

[1] Inspections (in office reviews and on site examinations).

Discussion

Ministry staff conduct inspections in order to determine compliance with regulatory requirements. Many factors influence the frequency and nature of inspections, including risk to human health and the environment, compliance history of the regulated party, resources and community concerns. Inspection targets under the *Environmental Management Act* for 2017-2020 have been significantly augmented to reflect increases in staffing and resources.

While each agency conducts inspections under their respective legislation, the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Energy and Mines and the Environmental Assessment Office have created a new performance measure that formally tracks their joint inspections. This is the result of an increased emphasis on coordinated compliance and enforcement efforts with respect to mining.

Objective 4.4: Optimize outdoor recreation and tourism opportunities within parks and protected areas

The Province is building on its world-renowned provincial parks system through the BC Parks Future Strategy to enable British Columbians and others to connect with the Province's iconic landscapes in a sustainable and memorable way.

Strategies

The Ministry leads these efforts by:

- Providing new and diverse recreation, heritage and cultural visitor experiences in addition to traditional BC Parks services and offerings
- Growing and enhancing BC Parks as a pillar in B.C.'s tourism industry
- Fostering public engagement to connect citizens to the management of parks and protected areas

Increased investment by the Province will work to enhance conservation and recreation services, improve services for persons with disabilities and launch a new BC Parks Foundation and related initiatives for community groups, businesses and individuals to come together and have a voice in BC Parks priorities.

Performance Measure 6: Park visitation

Performance Measure	2015/16 Actual	2016/17 Forecast	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target	2019/2020 Target
Number of recorded park visits	23.8 million	23.9 million	24.2 million	24.5 million	24.8 million

Data Source: Ministry of Environment, manually compiled.

Discussion

The number of recorded park visits measures the contribution of the provincial parks to the government's priorities of healthy communities, tourism and the economy. It also indicates trends in public uptake of outdoor recreation opportunities provided by BC Parks.

Resource Summary

Ministry of Environment	2016/17 Restated Estimates[1]	2017/18 Estimates	2018/19 Plan	2019/20 Plan
Operating Expenses ($000)				
Environmental Protection	8,560	11,531	11,726	11,488
Environmental Sustainability	22,687	22,730	22,972	22,972
BC Parks	31,158	49,266	39,669	39,578
Conservation Officer Service	15,284	15,476	15,676	15,676
Climate Action[2]	17,526	16,535	14,645	12,845
Executive and Support Services	21,967	23,069	23,123	23,099
Sub-Total	117,182	138,607	127,811	125,658
Park Enhancement Fund special account	1,800	1,800	1,800	1,800
Sustainable Environment Fund	18,935	18,935	18,935	18,935
Total	**137,917**	**159,342**	**148,546**	**146,393**
Ministry Capital Expenditures ($000)				
Executive and Support Services[3]	17,537	21,065	24,409	18,043
Park Enhancement Fund special account	400	400	400	400
Total	**17,937**	**21,465**	**24,809**	**18,443**

Other Financing Transactions ($000)				
Disbursements[4]	13,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Net Cash (Requirements)	13,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Total Disbursements	**13,000**	**10,000**	**10,000**	**10,000**
Total Net Cash Source (Requirements)	**13,000**	**10,000**	**10,000**	**10,000**

Notes:

[1] For comparative purposes, amounts shown for 2016/17 are consistent with the presentation of the *2017/18 Estimates*.

[2] Climate Action decreases of $1.8 million each year related to scheduled industry program development payments.

[3] Ministry Capital Expenditures, Executive and Support Services increase related to expansion of campsites within BC Parks.

[4] Other Financing Transactions decrease of $3.0 million commencing in 2017/18 resulting from a scheduled reduction of contractual obligations to purchase Greenhouse Gas Emissions offset for inventory.

Further information on program funding and vote recoveries is available in the Estimates and Supplement to the Estimates.

Environmental Assessment Office

Purpose of the Office

The Environmental Assessment Office ("Office") neutrally administers the process of assessing proposed major projects for potentially significant adverse environmental, social, economic, health and heritage effects. The Office seeks to meaningfully engage the public and Aboriginal groups in the environmental assessment process and is responsible for overseeing compliance and enforcement of reviewable projects throughout the life of the project.

The Environmental Assessment Process

Proposed projects are reviewable if they meet or exceed thresholds defined in the Reviewable Projects Regulation.[1]

The Minister of Environment can also designate any project that has not been substantially started as reviewable. In addition, proponents may request their project be accepted for review.[2]

Once the Office determines that an application is complete, it must review the application within 180 days. The Office prepares an assessment report for the Minister of Environment and the second deciding minister, which identifies the potential effects associated with the project, including impacts to established or asserted Aboriginal and treaty rights, and conclusions on the significance of those effects. Based on the assessment report and the recommendations of the Office's Executive Director and any other information ministers deem relevant, ministers may either grant or refuse a certificate. Alternatively, ministers may order further assessment should they determine that the information is insufficient on which to base a decision. If ministers issue a certificate, proponents are legally required to adhere to conditions of the certificate.

After a project is certified, the certificate holder must ensure it is in compliance with the conditions of the certificate through permitting, construction, operating and decommissioning phases. The Office works with other government agencies to coordinate compliance oversight through inspections, reviewing the certificate holder's compliance self-reports, responding to complaints and other efforts.

[1] For example, if a proposed coal mine is projected to produce ≥ 250,000 tonnes of coal per year, it would be automatically reviewable.

[2] A proponent may request (or "opt-in") that the Environmental Assessment Office consider designating its project (that otherwise would not be reviewable) as a reviewable project.

Strategic Direction and Context

Environmental Assessment Activity

The demand for environmental assessment of proposed projects in B.C. remains strong. Under the *BC Jobs Plan* and the *Liquefied Natural Gas Strategy*, the number of proposed projects in B.C. continues to increase. As of January 2017, there were 29 active projects currently under review: 11 are mining, 10 are energy/power, three are transportation, one is water management and four are liquefied natural gas. In total, the potential capital investment for all active projects currently in the environmental assessment process is over $122 billion.[3]

Federal-Provincial Cooperation

Often major projects in B.C. require both federal and provincial environmental assessments.

In 2013, the BC Environmental Assessment Office and the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency ("Agency") signed a Memorandum of Understanding that establishes expectations, roles and procedures for implementing the substitution of environmental assessments in B.C. Under substitution where both federal and provincial environmental assessments are required, there can be a single review process (the provincial one) and two decisions (federal and provincial).

As of January 2017, the federal government has approved the substitution of 13 environmental assessment reviews. Two of these reviews have been successfully completed, and another two are in the final stages of application review. Where substitution does not apply, British Columbia and the Agency work together to coordinate working group review and other technical and administrative aspects of the two assessment processes.

On January 27, 2016, the Federal Government announced a review of all federal environmental assessment (EA) processes, with a goal of updating them to include greater transparency for the approval of major projects. Throughout 2016, the Office represented B.C. at federal government hearings, providing input on the B.C. experience of harmonization and substitution, and supported the view that the practice of substitution can successfully maintain transparency, public access to information, strong First Nations consultations and the opportunity for public involvement throughout the entire assessment process.

[3] Effective 2016/2017, the Office is reporting only on those projects actively pursuing the requirements for an environmental assessment certificate. This includes active projects in the pre-application and applications stages of review, and those that are in the application stage that have been suspended.

Environmental Assessment Office Project Information and Collaboration System (EPIC)

The Office is currently modernizing its electronic project information centre to improve both the efficiency and transparency of the Environmental Assessment process. The new Environmental Assessment Office Project Information and Collaboration System (EPIC) is scheduled to launch by the end of the 2016/2017 fiscal year. At launch, EPIC will provide stakeholders, First Nations and the public with enhanced access to information and ability to engage with the environmental assessment process. In addition, it sets the groundwork to continuously improve and, as necessary, expand, the tools, processes and capabilities that support Office staff and project proponents to perform the business of environmental assessments.

Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Performance Measures

Goal 1: Conducting timely and efficient Environmental Assessments

Objective 1.1: Build upon a strong legislative framework

British Columbia has had environmental assessment legislation with a dedicated office since 1995. The Environmental Assessment Office neutrally administers a legally defined process that is predictable, transparent, timely, procedurally fair and holds all participants accountable.

Strategies

Key strategies for this objective include:

- Appropriately scoping project reviews and instituting a project management discipline in environmental assessments to adhere to the legislated 180-day application review period
- Identifying policy and practice options to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the environmental assessment review process
- Service modernization, including an enhanced web presence and electronic collaboration tools

Performance Measure 1: Application reviews in the B.C. environmental assessment process are completed within 180-days

Performance Measure	2016/17 Forecast	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target	2019/20 Target
Per cent of application reviews completed within 180-days:				
B.C. process only	100%	100%	100%	100%
Joint B.C./Canada Process	100%	100%	100%	100%

Data Source: Environmental Assessment Office, manually compiled.

Discussion

The legislated timelines in the *Environmental Assessment Act* include a 180-day limit for the review of applications for environmental assessment certificates. This timeline offers certainty in understanding the duration of steps in environmental assessment and supports timely planning for the public, government, Aboriginal groups, proponents and other potentially affected parties.

Objective 1.2: Ensure the effectiveness of environmental assessments

Continuously improving effectiveness and efficiency is key to maintaining the integrity of B.C.'s environmental assessment process.

Strategies

Key strategies for this objective include ongoing implementation of:

- A quality assurance program that ensures continuous improvement of the environmental assessment process
- A compliance and enforcement program to ensure projects comply with certificate requirements
- Collaboration with other provincial agencies to improve service to clients, reducing overlap and duplication with other federal and provincial regulators

Performance Measure 2: Compliance inspections completed on certified projects

Performance Measure	2016/17 Forecast	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target	2019/20 Target
Number of compliance inspections completed on certified projects	25	27	29	31

Data Source: Environmental Assessment Office, manually compiled.

Performance Measure 3: Coordinated Mine Inspections (new)

Performance Measure	2015/16 Baseline	2016/17 Forecast	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target	2019/2020 Target
Number of mine inspections coordinated with Ministry of Energy and Mines and the Ministry of Environment[1]	N/A	N/A	5	10	15

Data Source: Manually compiled by the Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Energy and Mines, the Environmental Assessment Office.

[1] Inspections (in office reviews and on site examinations).

Discussion

The Office's compliance and enforcement program undertakes various compliance oversight activities, including field inspections, administrative inspections, review of complaints, investigations, compliance promotion and enforcement. The program works closely with other agencies to ensure effective coordination of compliance oversight of environmental assessment conditions and permitting requirements.

Inspections are a key tool that the Office uses to promote compliance and enforce legally binding environmental assessment certificate conditions. The Office ensures continuous improvement of environmental assessment certificates by incorporating lessons learned through inspections and other compliance oversight into new environmental assessments. The Office posts all inspection reports and enforcement actions to ensure acesss to compliance information for the public and permitting authorities.

While each agency conducts inspections under their respective legislation, the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Energy and Mines and the Environmental Assessment Office have created a new performance measure that formally tracks their joint inspections. This is the result of an increased emphasis on coordinated compliance and enforcement efforts with respect to mining.

Resource Summary

Environmental Assessment Office	2016/17 Restatement[1] Estimates	2017/18 Estimates	2018/19 Plan	2019/20 Plan
Operating Expenses ($000)				
Environmental Assessment Office	11,828	11,870	11,882	11,773

Notes:

[1] For comparative purposes, amounts shown for 2016/17 are consistent with the presentation of the *2017/18 Estimates*.

Appendix

Ministry of Environment Contact Information

Headquarters
Victoria
Telephone: 250 387-9870
Fax: 250 387-6003
Website: www.gov.bc.ca/env/
Additional contact information can be found at www.gov.bc.ca/env/contacts.html

Regional Offices

Coast Region

West Coast

Nanaimo Office:
Telephone: 250 751-3100
Fax: 250 751-3103
Website: www.env.gov.bc.ca/van-island/
Other offices: Black Creek, Duncan, Goldstream Park, Queen Charlotte City, Parksville, Port Alberni, Port Hardy, Ucluelet

South Coast

Surrey Office:
Telephone: 604 582-5200
Fax: 604 930-7119
Website: www.env.gov.bc.ca/lower-mainland/
Other offices: Brackendale (Squamish), Cultus Lake, Maple Ridge, North Vancouver, Sechelt, Powell River

Southern Interior Region

Cariboo/Thompson

Kamloops Office:
Telephone: 250 371-6200
Fax: 250 828-4000
Website: www.env.gov.bc.ca/thompson/

Williams Lake Office:
Telephone: 250 398-4530
Fax: 250 398-4214
Website: www.env.gov.bc.ca/cariboo/
Other offices: Clearwater, Lillooet, Merritt, Kelowna, Oliver, Princeton, Vernon, 100 Mile House, Quesnel

Kootenay/Okanagan

Nelson Office:
Telephone: 250 354-6333
Fax: 250 354-6332
Website: www.env.gov.bc.ca/kootenay/
Other offices: Castlegar, Creston/West Creston, Fernie, Grand Forks, Invermere, Golden, Revelstoke

Penticton Office:
Telephone: 250 490-8200
Fax: 250 490-2231
Website: www.env.gov.bc.ca/okanagan/

Cranbrook Office:
Telephone: 250 489-8540
Fax: 250 489-8506

Northern Region

Skeena

Smithers Office:
Telephone: 250 847-7260
Fax: 250 847-7591
Website: www.env.gov.bc.ca/skeena/
Other offices: Atlin, Burns Lake, Dease Lake, Terrace/Lakelse Lake

Omineca

Environmental Protection Division
Conservation Officer Service
Prince George Office:
Telephone: 250 565-6135
Fax: 250 565-6629

Environmental Sustainability
Parks and Protected Areas Division
Prince George Office:
Telephone: 250 565-6135
Fax: 250 565-6940

Website: www.env.gov.bc.ca/omineca/
Other offices: Vanderhoof, Mackenzie, Mount Robson, Fort St. James

Peace

Fort St. John Office:
Telephone: 250 787-3411
Fax: 250 787-3490

Water Stewardship Division:
Phone: 250 565-6135
Fax: 250 565-6629

Website: www.env.gov.bc.ca/peace/
Other offices: Chetwynd/Moberly Lake Park, Dawson Creek, Fort Nelson/Liard Hotsprings

Report all Poachers and Polluters

Telephone: Dial Toll-Free 1-877-952-7277
Website: http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/cos/rapp/form.htm

Environmental Assessment Office Contact Information

836 Yates Street
PO Box 9426 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria B.C. V8W 9V1
Email: eaoinfo@gov.bc.ca
Website: www.eao.gov.bc.ca
Additional contact information can be found at http://www.eao.gov.bc.ca/contact_us.html